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IAC-D-100/59
11 February 1958

INTELLIGENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Validity Study of NIE 12-57:

Stability of the Soviet Satellite Structure,

published 19 February 1957

The attached validity study of NIE 12-57 was noted by the IAC on 4 February 1958 (IAC-M-327, item 6 c).

STAT

JOHN HEIRES
Secretary

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1. The main conclusions of NIE 12-57 still appear to be valid; for example, the estimates that Soviet policy would emphasize the security of the Satellite regimes and Soviet leadership, that the USSR was determined to remain in Eastern Europe, and that Poland's success in maintaining its semi-independence would be a key factor affecting future developments in the Satellites. However, to the limited extent that it is now possible to assess the validity of the projections made in this estimate, three of its judgments now appear to have been somewhat inaccurate.

2. NIE 12-57 underestimated the ability of the USSR and its Satellite regimes to restore order to the Satellite area relatively quickly and efficiently after the upheavals of October 1956. Thus, although stating that another revolt was unlikely, the estimate foresaw "greater strains" on Party unity within the Satellites than had existed prior to October 1956 and predicted that Soviet policy is "unlikely to reduce" tensions in Eastern Europe "or even to restore the degree of acquiescence prevailing earlier." We point out in NIE 12-58 that the USSR and its Satellite regimes have succeeded in effect in stabilizing the situation in the Satellites and reducing tensions, though we continue to anticipate "an atmosphere of change and ferment more highly charged than under Stalin."

3. The estimate also appears to have erred in suggesting that Soviet policy toward Poland would be directed toward undermining the Gomulka regime (in part through a rebuilding of the pro-Soviet faction in the Polish Party) and toward restoration of a "more reliable Communist regime." We now believe that the USSR has probably withdrawn its open support of the pro-Soviet faction and that the USSR's acceptance of the Gomulka regime appears to be a long-range adjustment rather than a temporary accommodation.

4. Finally, we appear to have overestimated the likely role of Communist China as a factor influencing the Soviets toward a more liberal policy in the Satellites.

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